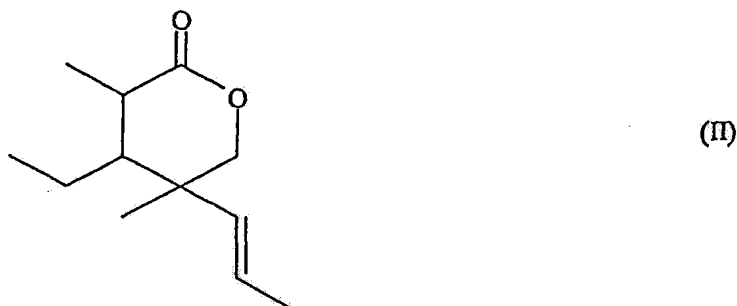


IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claim 1 (canceled).

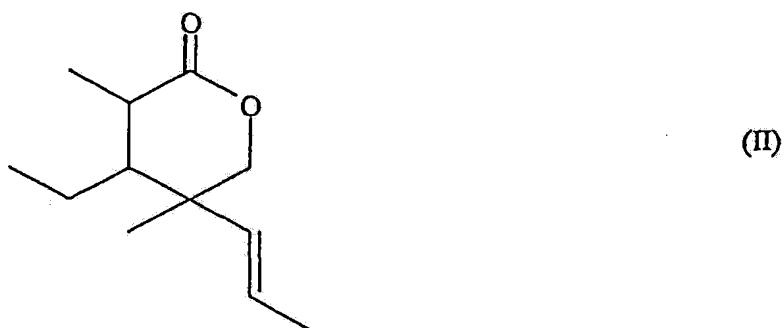
Claim 2 (original): A valerolactone compound represented by the formula (II):



Claim 3 (original): The valerolactone compound according to claim 2, obtained by acting a base on propanal, and treating the resulting reaction solution with an acid.

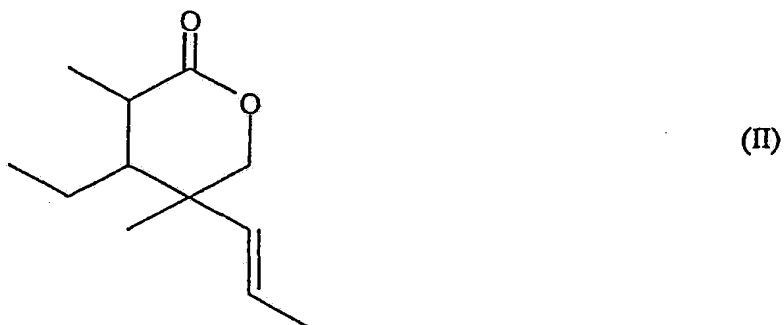
Claim 4 (original): The valerolactone compound according to claim 3, wherein said base is one or more compounds selected from the group consisting of potassium hydroxide, sodium hydroxide, potassium methoxide and sodium methoxide.

Claim 5 (original): A process for preparing a valerolactone represented by the formula (II):



comprising acting a base on propanal, and treating the resulting reaction solution with an acid.

Claim 6 (original): A process for preparing a valerolactone represented by the formula (II):

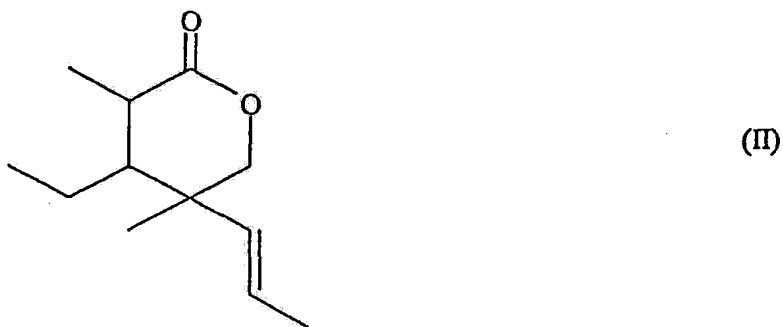


comprising acting a base on 2-methyl-2-pentenal, and treating the resulting reaction solution with an acid.

Claim 7 (original): The process for preparing a valerolactone compound according to claim 5 or 6, wherein said base is one or more compounds selected from the group consisting of potassium hydroxide, sodium hydroxide, potassium methoxide and sodium methoxide.

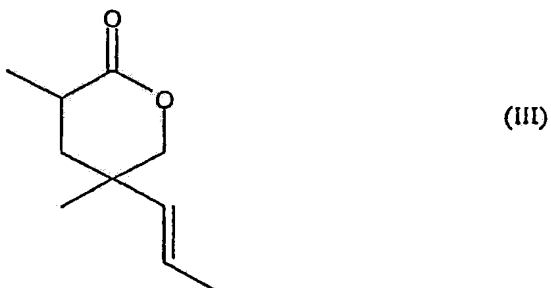
Claim 8 (canceled).

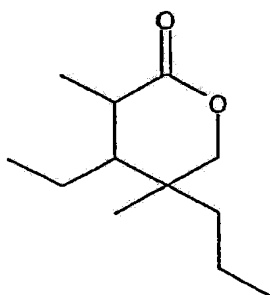
Claim 9 (original): A perfume composition comprising a valerolactone compound represented by the formula (II):



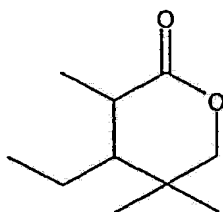
Claim 10 (original): A perfume composition comprising the valerolactone compound as defined in claim 3.

Claim 11 (currently amended): The perfume composition according to claim [[8 or]] 9 or 25, further comprising one or more compounds selected from the group consisting of the following compounds represented by the formulae (III) to (VII):

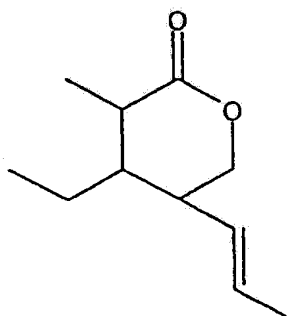




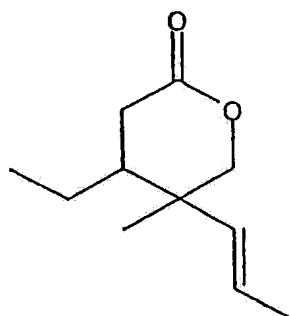
(IV)



(V)



(VI)

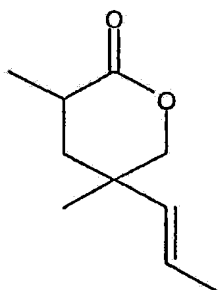


(VII)

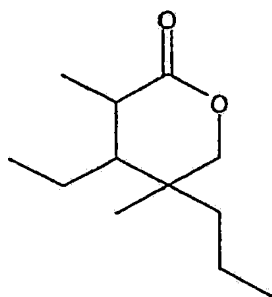
Claim 12 (currently amended): The perfume composition according to claim [[8 or]]  
9 or 25, wherein the content of said valerolactone compound is at least 0.001% by weight.

Claim 13 (original): The perfume composition according to claim 9, wherein the  
content of said valerolactone compound is at least 0.2% by weight.

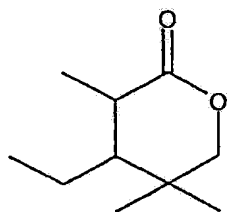
Claim 14 (original): A perfume composition comprising two or more compounds  
selected from the group consisting of the following compounds represented by the formulae  
(III) to (VII):



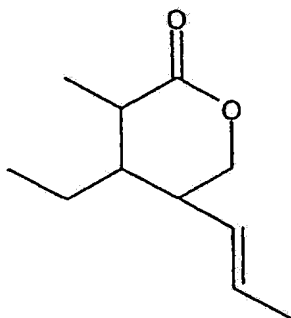
(III)



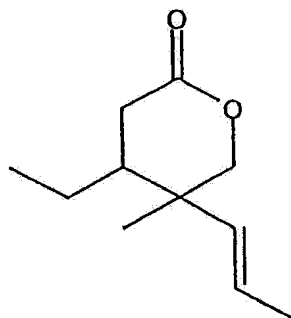
(IV)



(V)



(VI)



(VII)

Claim 15 (currently amended): The perfume composition according to ~~any one of~~ ~~claims 8 to 10~~ claim 9 or 25, further comprising a perfume of which main starting material is a camphorenal.

Claim 16 (currently amended): The perfume composition according to ~~any one of~~ ~~claims 8 to 10~~ claim 9 or 25, further comprising one or more compounds selected from the group consisting of the following components (A):

(A) 2-ethyl-4-(2,2,3-trimethyl-3-cyclopenten-1-yl)-2-buten-1-ol, 3-methyl-5-(2,2,3-trimethyl-3-cyclopenten-1-yl)-pentan-2-ol, 2-methyl-4-(2,2,3-trimethyl-3-cyclopenten-1-yl)-butanol, 3,3-dimethyl-5-(2,2,3-trimethyl-3-cyclopenten-1-yl)-4-penten-2-ol, 3-methyl-5-

(2,2,3-trimethyl-3-cyclopenten-1-yl)-4-penten-2-ol, 2-methyl-4-(2,2,3-trimethyl-3-cyclopenten-1-yl)-2-buten-1-ol, and optical isomers thereof.

Claim 17 (original): The perfume composition according to claim 16, wherein the weight ratio of the compound represented by the formula (I) to the component (A) is at least 1:100,000.

Claim 18 (original): The perfume composition according to claim 16, wherein the weight ratio of the compound represented by the formula (I) to the component (A) is at least 1:500.

Claim 19 (withdrawn-currently amended): A household product comprising the perfume composition as defined in ~~any one of claims 8 to 18~~ claim 9 or 25.

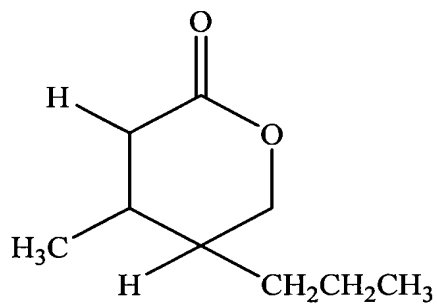
Claim 20 (withdrawn-currently amended): A personal care and cosmetic product comprising the perfume composition as defined in ~~any one of claims 8 to 18~~ claim 9 or 25.

Claim 21 (withdrawn-currently amended): An environmental hygiene product comprising the perfume composition as defined in ~~any one of claims 8 to 18~~ claim 9 or 25.

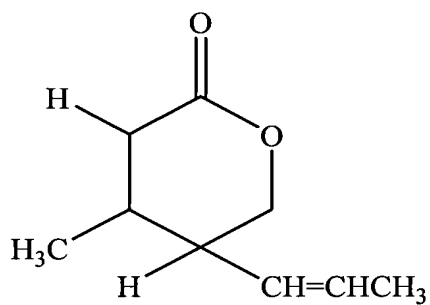
Claim 22 (withdrawn-currently amended): A beverage comprising the perfume composition as defined in ~~any one of claims 8 to 18~~ claim 9 or 25.

Claim 23 (withdrawn-currently amended): A food comprising the perfume composition as defined in ~~any one of claims 8 to 18~~ claim 9 or 25.

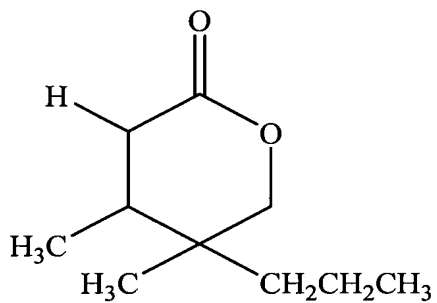
Claim 24 (new): A compound selected from the group consisting of:



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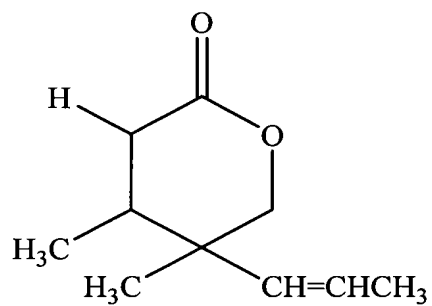


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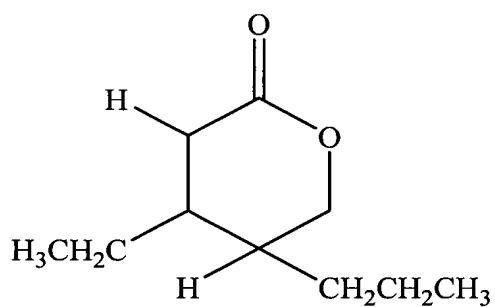


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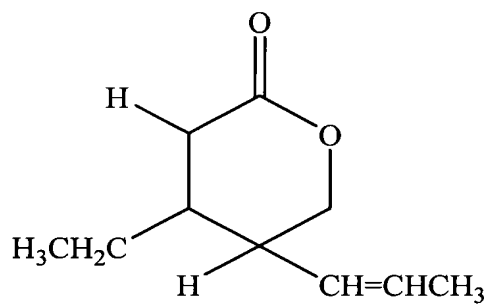




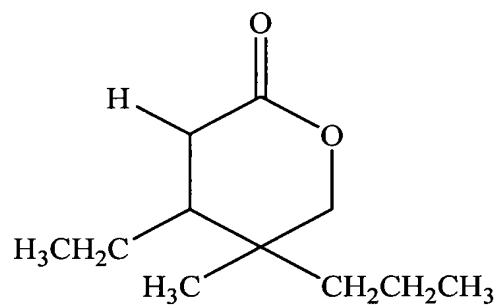
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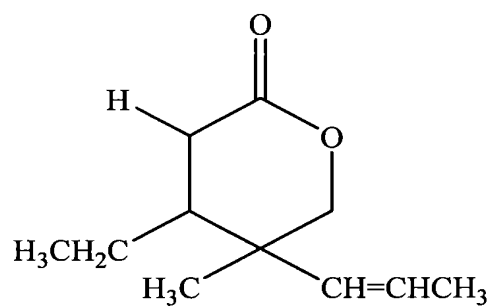
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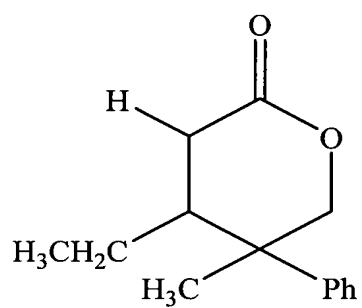
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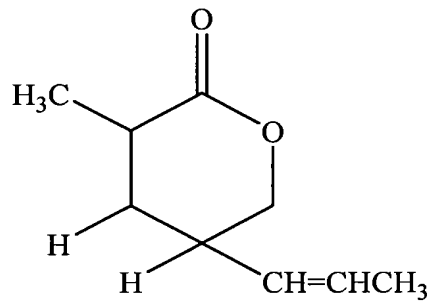
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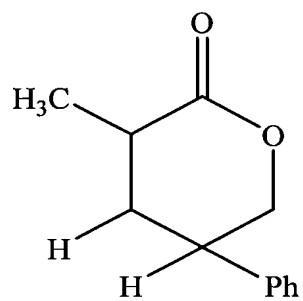
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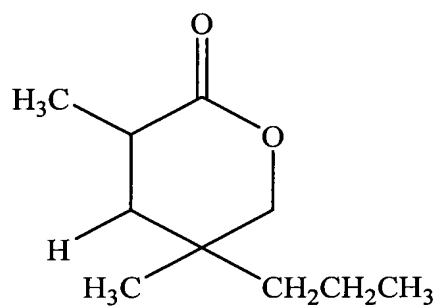
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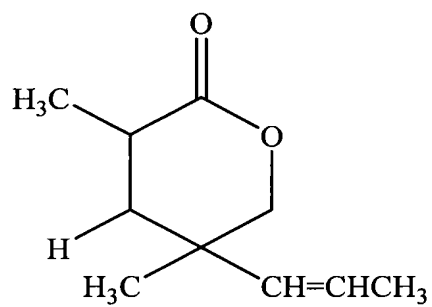
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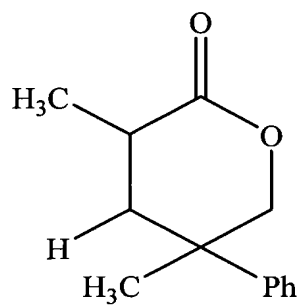
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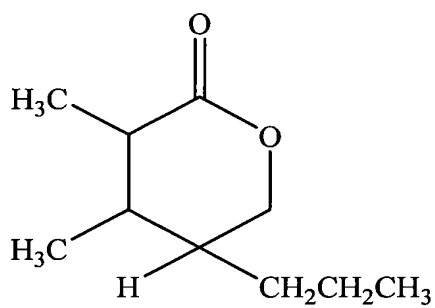
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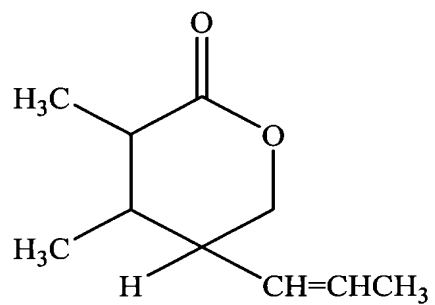
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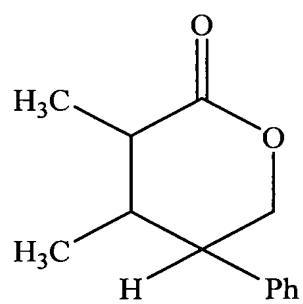
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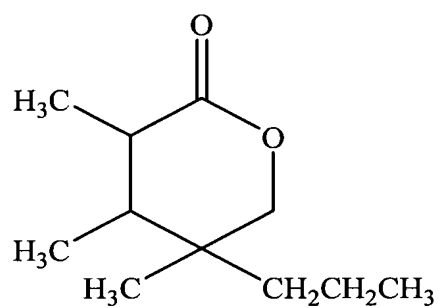
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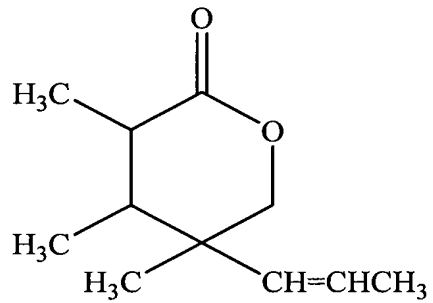
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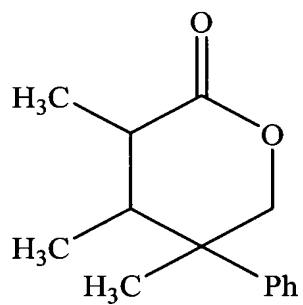
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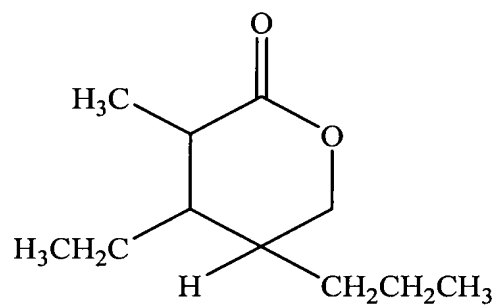
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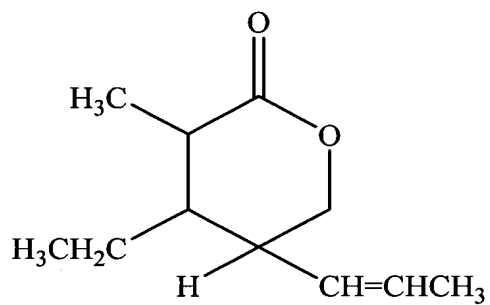
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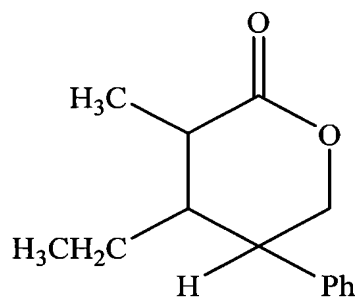
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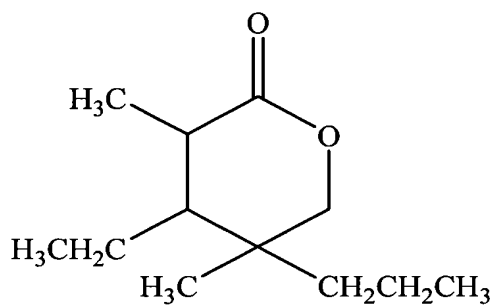
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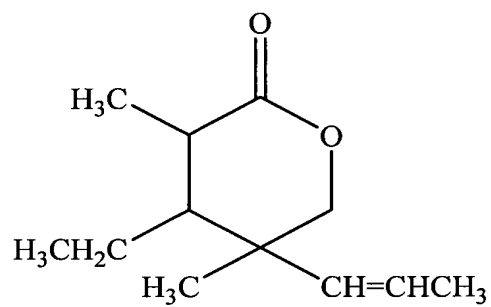
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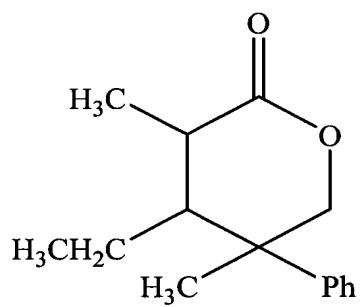
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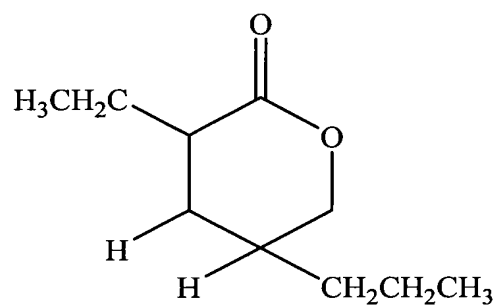
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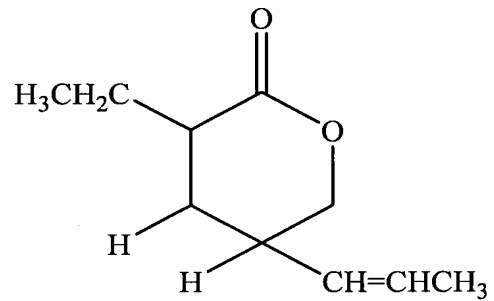


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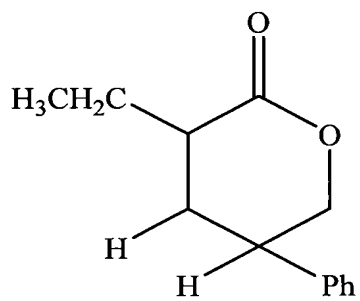


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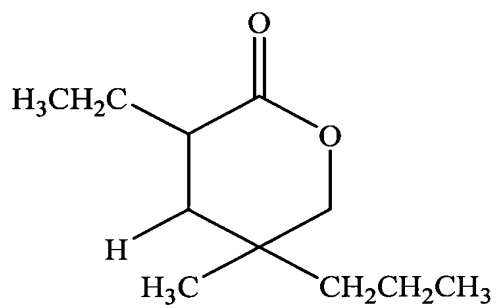




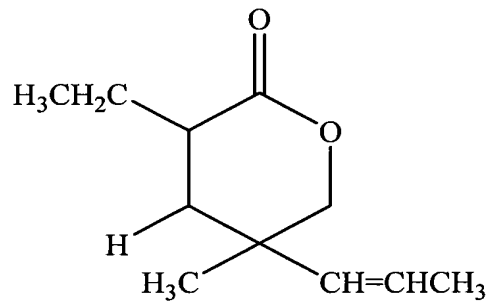
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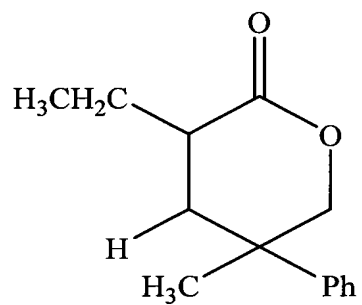
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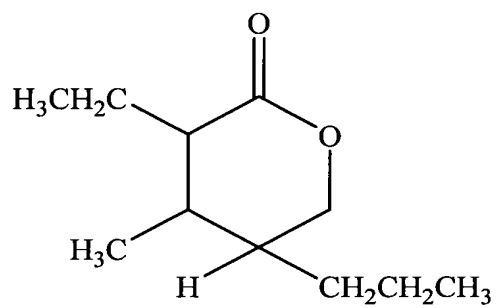
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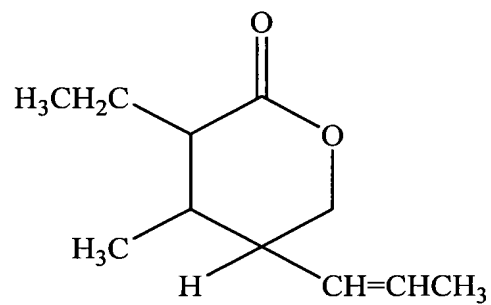
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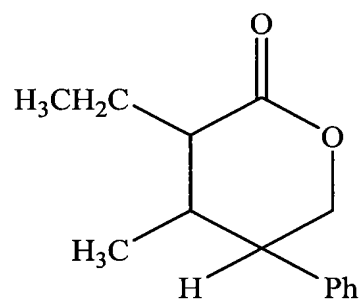
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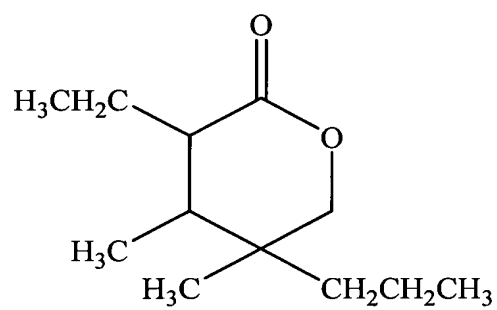
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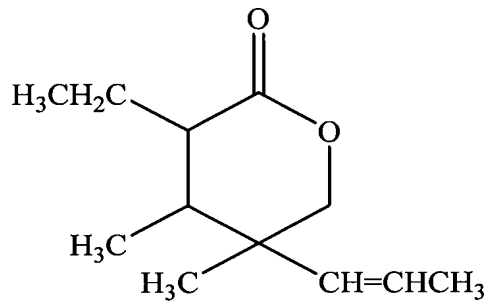
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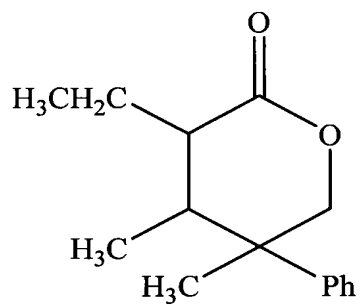
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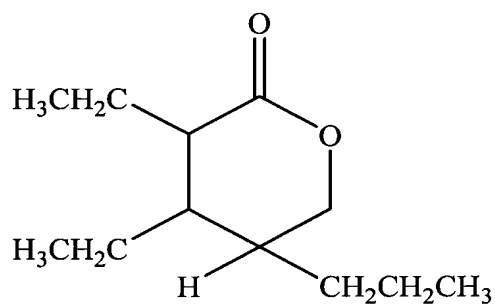
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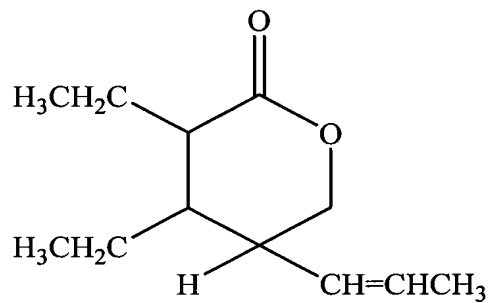
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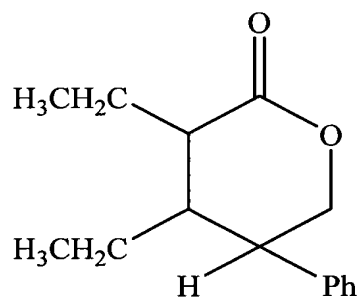
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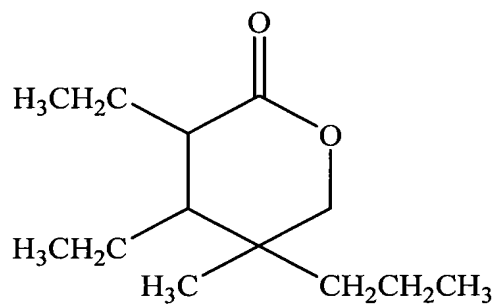
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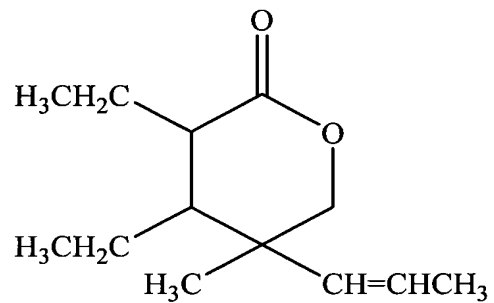
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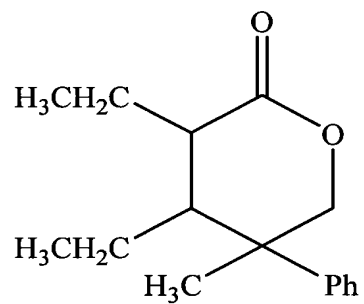


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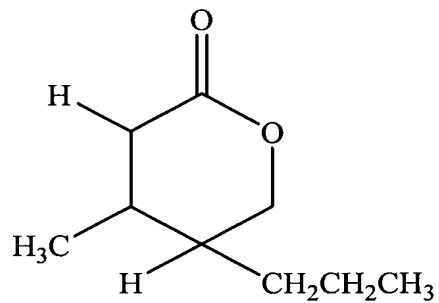
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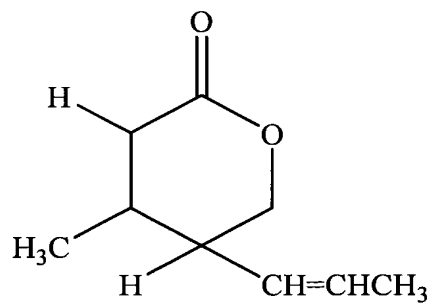


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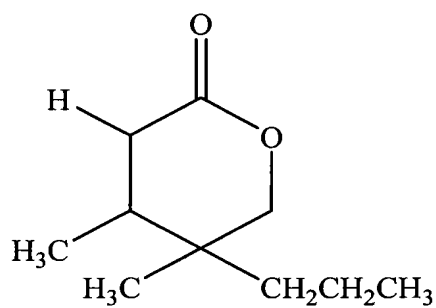
Claim 25 (new): A perfume composition comprising a compound selected from the group consisting of:



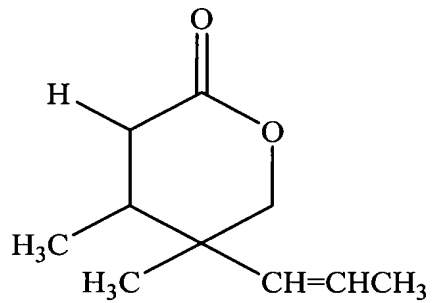
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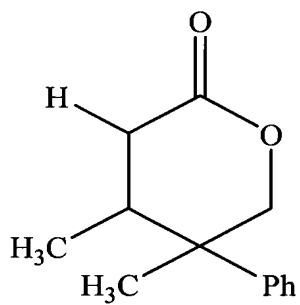
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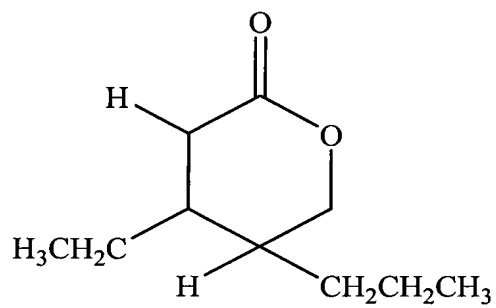
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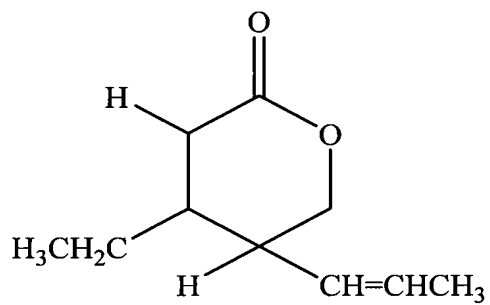


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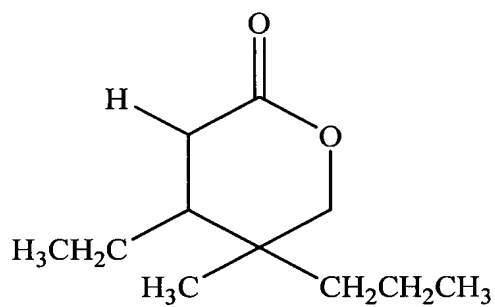


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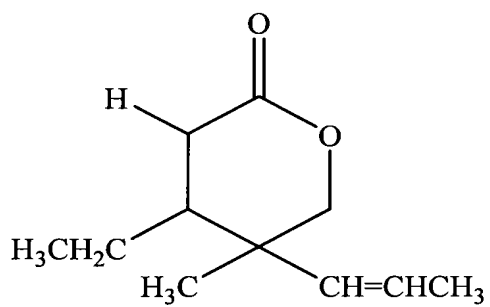




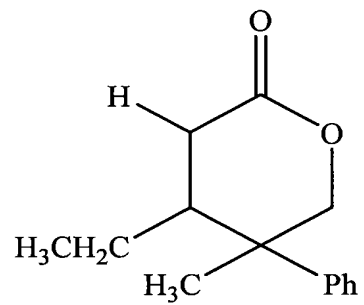
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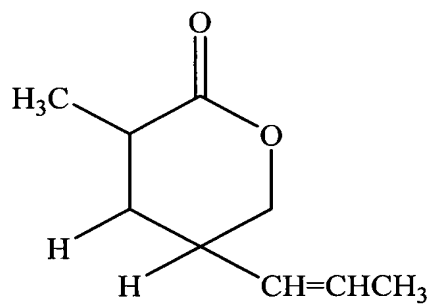
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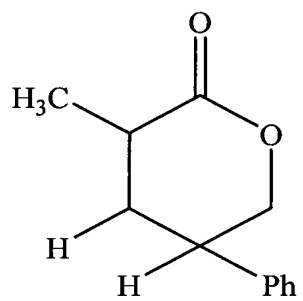
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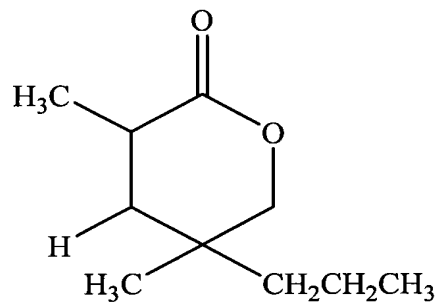
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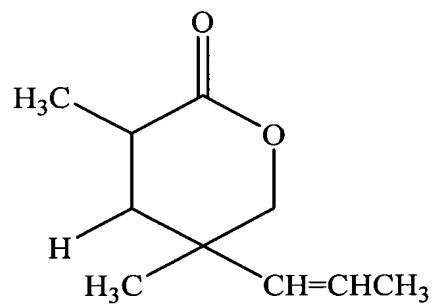
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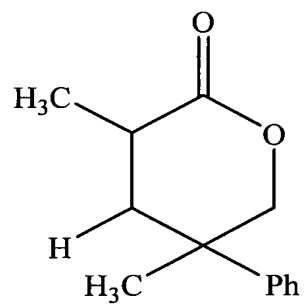
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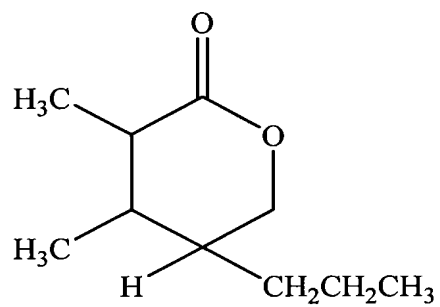
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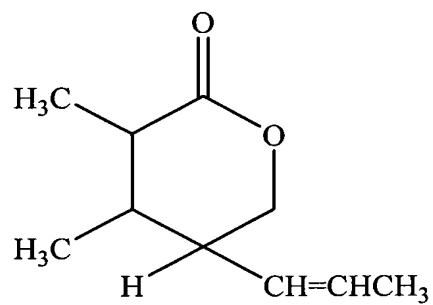
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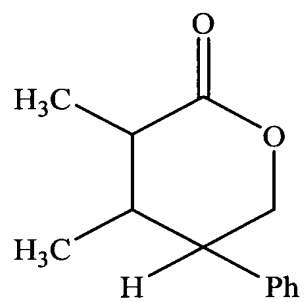
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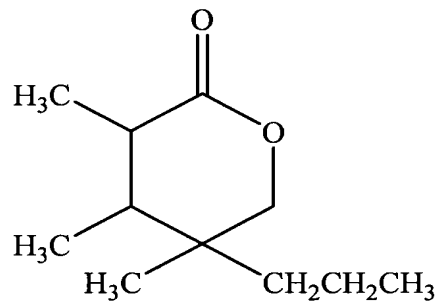
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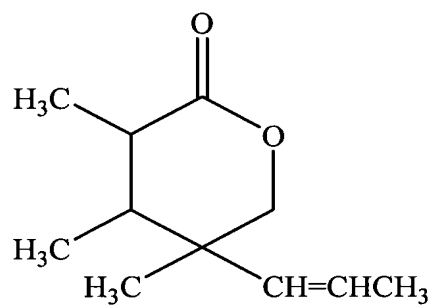
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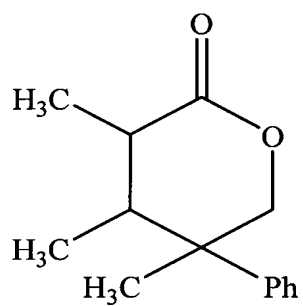
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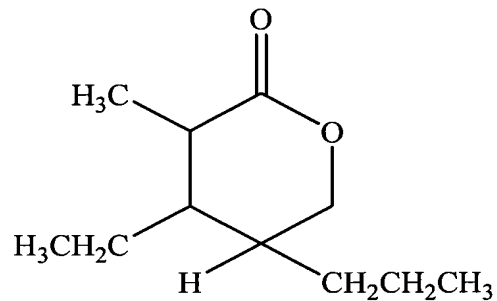
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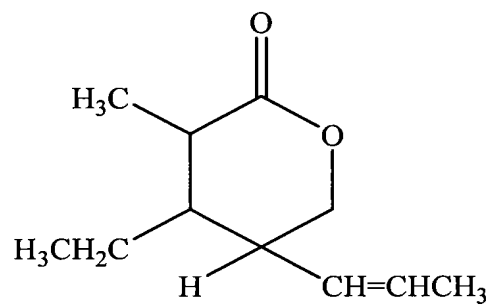
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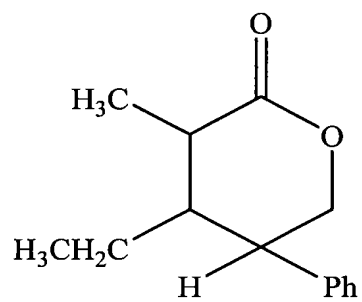
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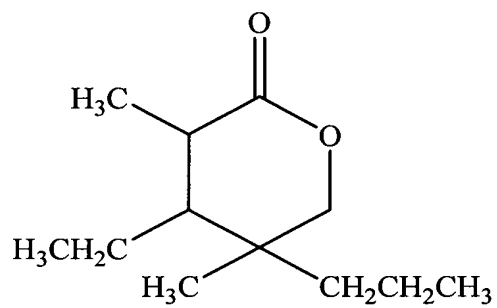
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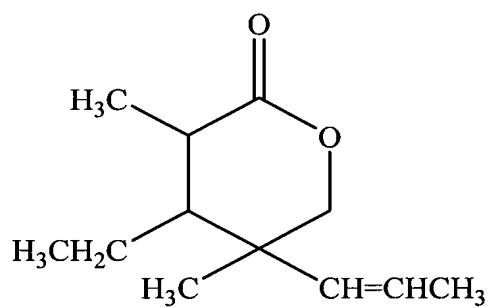
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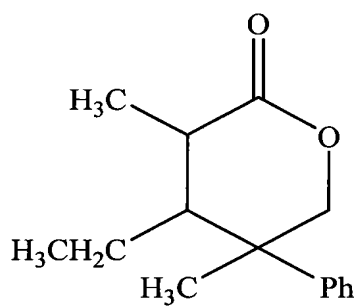
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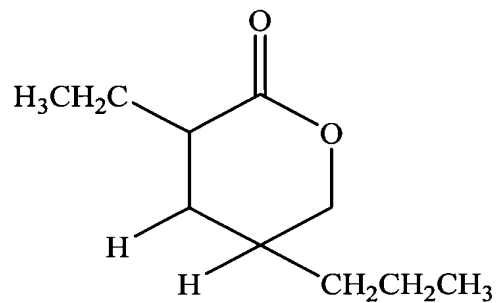
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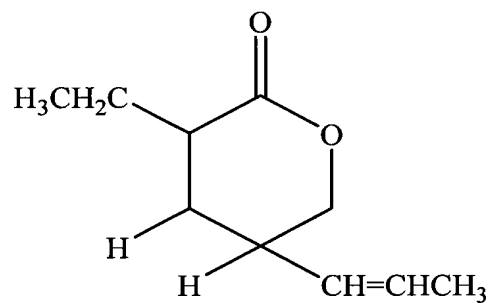
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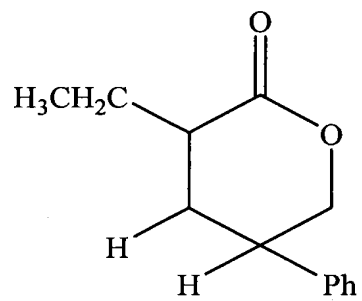
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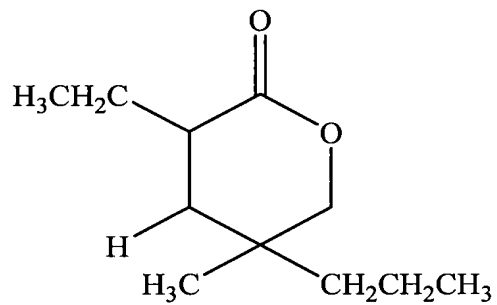


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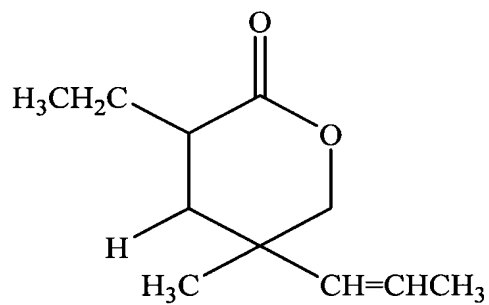


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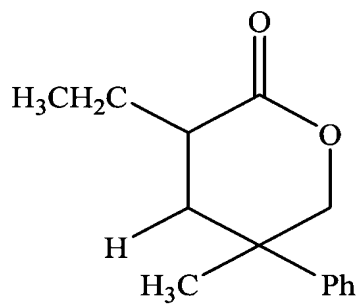




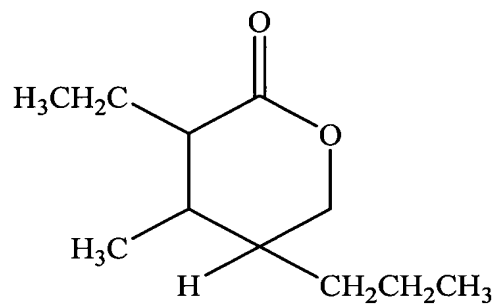
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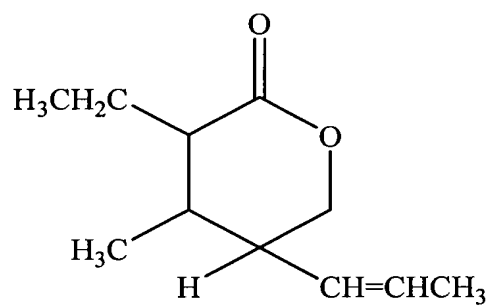
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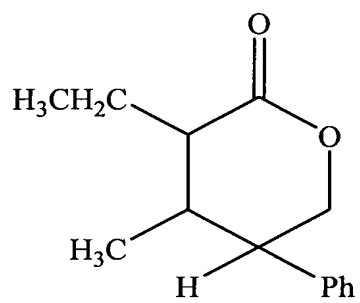
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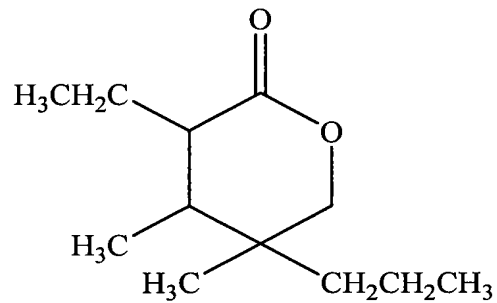
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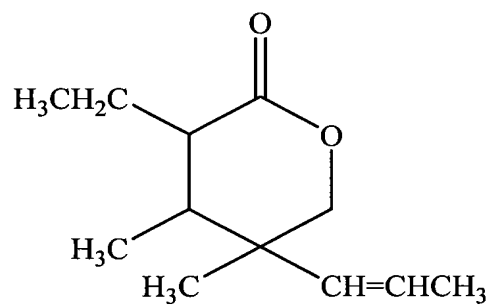
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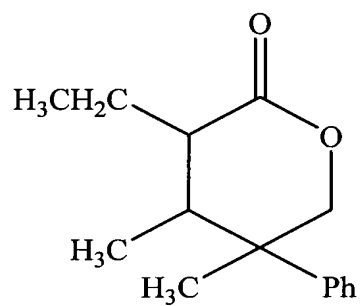
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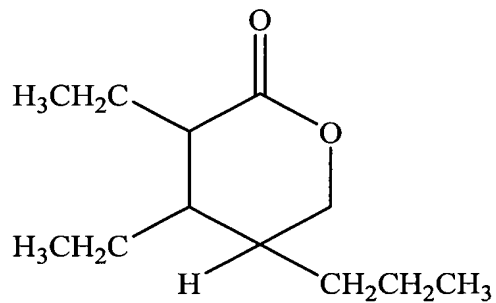
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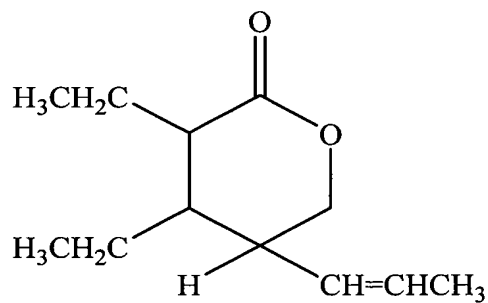
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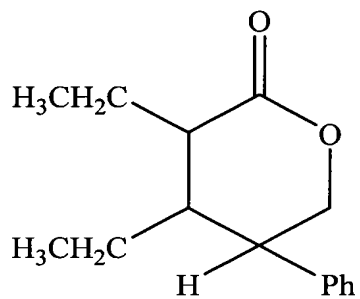
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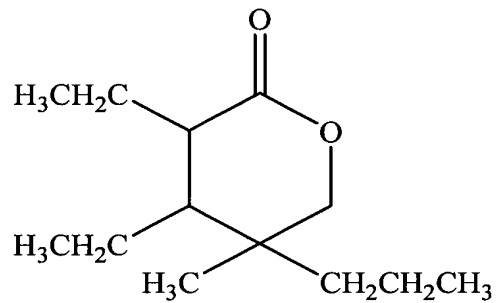
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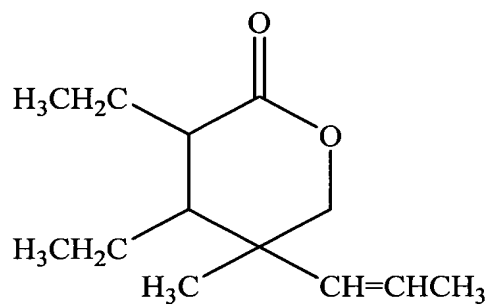
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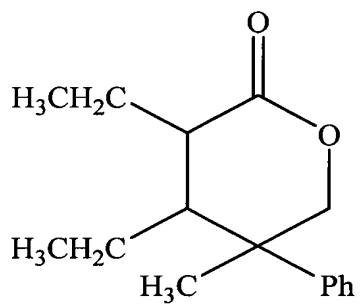


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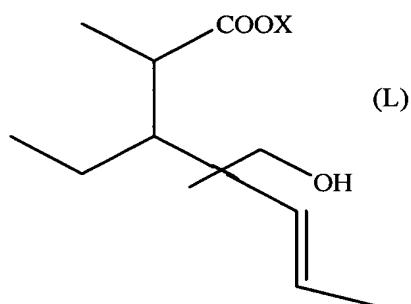
and



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Claim 26 (new): The valerolactone compound of Claim 3, which is obtained by a process comprising:

(a) reacting propanal with a base, to obtain a compound of formula (L):

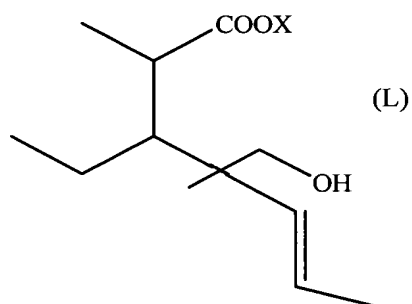


wherein X is K, Na, Ca, or Mg; and

(b) treating said compound of formula (L) with an acid to obtain said valerolactone compound.

Claim 27 (new): The process of Claim 5, which comprises:

(a) reacting propanal with a base, to obtain a compound of formula (L):

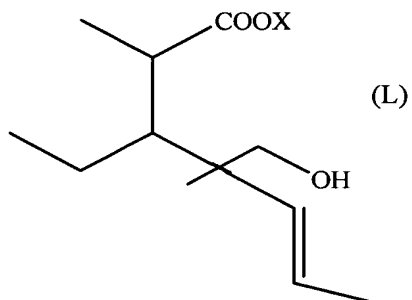


wherein X is K, Na, Ca, or Mg; and

(b) treating said compound of formula (L) with an acid to obtain said valerolactone compound.

Claim 28 (new): The process of Claim 6, which is obtained by a process comprising:

(a) reacting 2-methyl-2-pentenal with a base, to obtain a compound of formula (L):



wherein X is K, Na, Ca, or Mg; and

(b) treating said compound of formula (L) with an acid to obtain said valerolactone compound.